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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/435,996	11/08/1999	MITSUHIRO WATANABE	10P319372	5995

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EXAMINER

HUTTON JR, WILLIAM D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2178

DATE MAILED: 09/30/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/435,996

Applicant(s)

WATANABE, MITSUHIRO

Examiner

Doug Hutton

Art Unit

2178

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 December 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-22 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 November 1999 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3 and 5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

✓ ***Request for Information***

Applicant and the assignee of this application are required under 37 CFR 1.105 to provide the following information that the examiner has determined is reasonably necessary to the examination of this application. Examiner does not speak or read the Japanese language. Thus, Applicant must disclose what is meant by the terms "consonant mark" and "p-sound mark" (Claim 2, Line 7) and "romaji alphabet letters, numerals and symbols" (Claim 3, Line 3). Applicant must also illustrate what these marks, letters, numerals and symbols look like, so that Examiner can effectively search the prior art.

This requirement is an attachment of the enclosed Office action. A complete reply to the enclosed Office action must include a complete reply to this requirement. The time period for reply to this requirement coincides with the time period for reply to the enclosed Office action.

Specification

✓ The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it exceeds 150 words in length. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

✓ The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

- the term “mouth” on Page 2, Line 26 should be amended to – mouse – because it appears to be a typographic error; this same mistake also occurs on Page 2, Line 28 and Page 3, Line 1;
- the term “sonant” on Page 3, Line 8 should be amended to – consonant – because it appears to be a typographic error;
- the term “from” should be inserted between the number “11” and the term “the” on Page 17, Line 12 so that the specification reads more clearly;
- the letter “d” on Page 24, Line 6 should be amended to – b – because Figure 3(b) is the proper reference; and
- the phrase “the wit” on Page 24, Line 25 should be deleted because it appears to be a typographic error.

Appropriate correction is required.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: 5 (Page 17, Line 18).

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-3 are objected to because of the following informalities:

- the limitation “designating corresponding column and row coordinates *in a predetermined order* with a position input means” should be amended to – designating corresponding column and row coordinates with a position input means – so that the claim reads more clearly.

Claims 4-22 are objected to because of the following informalities:

- Claim 4, Line 4 includes the limitation “(i.e., m)”; this limitation must be deleted because only reference numerals may be included in parentheses;
- the phrase “with the consonant at a reference position and having a predetermined radius” in Lines 5-6 should be amended to – with a center position and a predetermined radius – so that the limitation better corresponds to the

written description; in the written description, the **circle** has a “center” position (Page 21, Line 5) and a predetermined radius;

- the phrase “being capable of” in Line 11 should be deleted so that the limitation is positively recited;
- the term “after” in Line 14 should be amended to – before – and the term “then” in Line 15 should be amended to – before being – so that the claim better corresponds to the written description
- the term “position” in Line 17 should be amended to – positions – because there are two “detected direction designation positions”;
- the term “modes” in Line 22 should be amended to – codes – because it appears to be a typographic error.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1:

The claim recites the limitation "a matrix array of M columns and N rows" in Line 5. This limitation is indefinite because the number of columns and rows in the matrix array is not specified. Thus, the scope of the claim cannot be determined.

Applicant can obviate this rejection by amending the limitation to – a matrix array

–.

For purposes of examination, Examiner will assume that the limitation reads per the aforementioned suggestion.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Royer et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,872,196.

Claim 1:

Royer et al. discloses a Japanese letter input method of inputting letters in a letter set used in a Japanese letter input device (Column 1, Lines 5-8), the method comprising the steps of:

- prearranging predetermined letters and symbols in a matrix array of M columns and N rows (see the matrix array – Column 2, Lines 20-33); and
- inputting any desired letter or symbol by designating corresponding column and row coordinates in a predetermined order with a position input means (Column 4, Lines 3-21 – the “rocker” key inputs the desired symbol by first specifying a consonant column and then specifying a vowel row).

Claim 2:

Royer et al. discloses a Japanese letter input method, wherein the letter set is obtained by arranging kana letters in the 50-letter set in a matrix array of column and rows (see the matrix array – Column 2, Lines 20-33), the columns each consisting of letters assigned by the same consonant (see the matrix array – Column 2, Lines 20-33), the rows each consisting of letters of the same vowel (see the matrix array – Column 2, Lines 20-33), the symbols including the consonant mark and the p-sound mark (Column 3, Lines 7-10 – the “B” sound is the “consonant mark” and the “P” sound is also included as specified in the cited text).

Claim 3:

Royer et al. discloses a Japanese letter input method, wherein the letter set is formed by arranging numerals and symbols in columns and rows (see Figure 1 – the numbers and symbols are arranged in columns and rows). Royer et al. also discloses a

Japanese letter input method, wherein the letter set is formed by arranging romaji alphabet letters in columns and rows (see the matrix array – Column 2, Lines 20-33).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 4-22 include allowable subject matter and will be allowed, if the above objections are obviated by amendment to the claims.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Claim 4:

The prior art fails to disclose or suggest a Japanese letter input device comprising:

- a direction designation unit that includes a pointer capable of being moved from a reference position radially in a two-dimensional plane and then circumferentially and then returned to the reference position, said direction designation unit detecting a first direction designation position to which the pointer is first radially moved and a second direction designation position to which the pointer is located after being moved circumferentially and before being returned to a reference position.

Claims 5-22:

These claims are dependent upon Claim 4 and thus include allowable subject matter.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: Watanabe, U.S. Patent No. 6,567,072; Masunaga, U.S. Patent No. 5,563,631; Weiss et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,225,980; Brodsky, U.S. Patent No. 4,910,503; and Yamada, U.S. Patent No. 6,351,657.

This Office action has an attached requirement for information under 37 CFR 1.105. A complete reply to this Office action must include a complete reply to the attached requirement for information. The time period for reply to the attached requirement coincides with the time period for reply to this Office action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Doug Hutton whose telephone number is (703) 305-1701. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

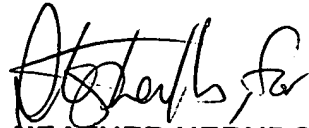
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Herndon, can be reached at (703) 308-5186. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 746-7239.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

WDH
September 5, 2003



**HEATHER HERNDON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECH CENTER 2100**